



FR-4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[Docket No. FD 35931]

Watco Holdings, Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—Texas New Mexico Railway, L.L.C.

Watco Holdings, Inc. (Watco), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption pursuant to 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(2) to continue in control of Texas New Mexico Railway, L.L.C. (TNMR), upon TNMR's becoming a Class III rail carrier. Watco owns, indirectly, 100 percent of the issued and outstanding stock of TNMR, a limited liability company.

This transaction is related to a concurrently filed verified notice of exemption in Texas New Mexico Railway—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Austin & Northwestern Railroad, Docket No. FD 35930, wherein TNMR seeks Board approval to acquire and operate approximately 104.191 miles of rail line owned by Austin & Northwestern Railway Company, Inc., between milepost 0.079 at Monahans, Tex., and milepost 104.27 at Lovington, N.M.

The transaction may be consummated on or after June 20, 2015, the effective date of the exemption (30 days after the notice of exemption was filed).

Watco is a Kansas corporation that currently controls, indirectly, one Class II rail carrier, and 30 Class III rail carriers, collectively operating in 22 states. For a complete

list of these rail carriers, and the states in which they operate, see Watco's notice of exemption filed on May 21, 2015. The notice is available on the Board's website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Watco represents that: (1) the rail lines to be operated by TNMR do not connect with any of the rail lines operated by the carriers in the Watco corporate family; (2) the transaction is not a part of a series of anticipated transactions that would result in such a connection; and (3) the transaction does not involve a Class I carrier. Therefore, the transaction is exempt from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 11323. See 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(2).

Watco states that the purpose of the transaction is to reduce overhead expenses, coordinate billing, maintenance, mechanical, and personnel policies and practices of its rail carrier subsidiaries, and thereby improve the overall efficiency of rail service provided by the railroads in the Watco corporate family.

Under 49 U.S.C. 10502(g), the Board may not use its exemption authority to relieve a rail carrier of its statutory obligation to protect the interests of its employees. Because the transaction involves the control of one Class II and one or more Class III rail carriers, the transaction is subject to the labor protection requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 11326(b) and Wisconsin Central Ltd.—Acquisition Exemption—Lines of Union Pacific Railroad, 2 S.T.B. 218 (1997).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed

at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions for stay must be filed by June 12, 2015 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 35931, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Karl Morell, Karl Morell & Associates, 655 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Suite 225, Washington, DC 20005.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at
“WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: June 1, 2015.

By the Board, Rachel D. Campbell, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Brendetta S. Jones

Clearance Clerk

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